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Depot grounds in Indian Territory.

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DEPOT GROUNDS IN INDIAN TERRITORY.

MAY 22, 1896.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. PENDLETON, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 8850.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 8850) to amend the act passed at present session for additional grounds for railroad station purposes in Indian Territory, having had the same under consideration, respectfully recommend its passage with the following amendments:

In line 6 strike out all after the word "by" and insert in lieu thereof the words "making section four of said act hereafter read as follows."

In line 7, after the word "That," insert as follows:

All lands acquired under the provisions of this act shall be used for railroad purposes strictly, and not more than twenty acres of land at any one station shall be acquired hereunder by any one railroad company; nor shall any additional land for station purposes be so acquired which is not contiguous to land already occupied for railroad purposes.

Amend the title by adding after the word "grounds" the words "and to correct alignments."

Some of the earlier lines of railroad constructed in the Indian Territory were built under pressure of time and upon such grades and curvature that it is now found necessary to straighten portions of the lines and thereby materially reduce existing grades. This will materially reduce cost of operation and enable the companies to reduce transportation charges. These changes are also necessitated to permit these earlier companies to thus operate in successful competition with other lines reaching common competing points. The bill provides that such changes shall not result in abandonment of any existing stations, and as the purpose is a laudable one, of direct public interest, and in line with railroad practice generally throughout the United States, the opportunity sought should be accorded.

The act thus amended contains ample safeguards in favor of all the rights of the Indians, both tribal and individual, with respect to the powers conferred by this proposed amendatory act, and your committee can perceive no objection thereto.